Umpqua Bank Compilation CD Celebrates Local Musicians

by K_Guice

How about a side of music with that new checking account? That is what Umpqua Bank is serving up to customers. The largest independent community bank in the Pacific Northwest and Northern California released a new compilation album from its popular Discover Local Music project on July 11.

The album, titled Discover Local Music: Vol. 1: Sacramento to Seattle, offers a diverse mix of some of the West Coastâ€™s best music. It features songs by independent artists like Ohmega Watts, Rye Hollow, Stephanie Schneiderman and Bendâ€™s own, David Bowers.

â€œUmpqua is continuing to challenge the idea of what a bank can be by supporting local music and promoting shared experiences,â€• said Ray Davis, Umpqua Bank CEO. â€œThe talented artists in our Discover Local Music catalog live and work in our communities and weâ€™re honored to share this album with music lovers throughout the West Coast.â€•

A CD launch party was held at the Century Street store in Bend on July 12. â€œWe invited some key customers and music aficionados in the area,â€• said Lani Hayward, EVP of creative strategies for Umpqua Bank. â€œIt was more about sitting back and enjoying the music.â€•

Hayward said the idea for the compilation CD came about when Paul Anthony, the CEO of Rumblefish, Inc. approached the company and asked, â€˜What does your brand sound like?â€™

â€œThat was a very interesting question and we thought about that for a little bit,â€• she said. â€œAs a community bank our sound is local and making a local music CD was a great way to highlight that.â€•

Anthony, who refers to himself as the big fish at Rumblefish, Inc., says it also is a great way to expose people to the talented area artist. â€œWeâ€™re showing local communities that there is world-class talent right in their own back yard,â€• he said

â€œThey are used to finding music in other places,â€• he added. However, Anthony says when people pick up a CD like Discover Local Music, they are surprised by the high quality. He says some people start thinking, maybe I want to go out and check out the local music scene.

â€œWhen you buy this CDâ€¦ that money goes back into your community,â€• Anthony said. â€œWhen you

buy a U2 album, that money doesnâ€™t go back into your community.â€• He points out that by supporting local artists, they will in turn feed that money back into local business. â€œThe entire community wins,â€• he added.

Hayward agrees, â€œSo, anytime any songs are downloaded or bought in the store they (the artists) get paid so they continue to do more of what they love,â€• she said. â€œThe artists are getting 50 percent back on their song. Itâ€™s just great.â€•

This is not the first unique marketing campaign for the community bank. The bank has a record of trying new things. Rather than sterile, cold, office settings, Umpqua has created computer cafe/banking "stores." Who wants a stuffy desk, when there is a cozy chair?

Along with their local-branded sound, there is an Umpqua-branded coffee blend, served with a side of cookies that customers can kick back and enjoy while watching the big screen television on inviting leather couches.

The bank even holds social events, like the recent speaking engagement and book signing for Olympic snowboarder Chris Klug. They host yoga classes, movie nights and other community events totally unrelated to banking.

â€œThere is a marketing element, but it goes beyond that,â€• Hayward said. She says music is so innate to all of us. â€œThere is an environmental effect that music can have. It is part of our everyday lives,â€• she adds.

Discover Local Music is available in local Umpqua stores. To preview the compilation CD and the featured artist, go to UmpquaMusic.com. A customized CD of up to 10 songs for $.75 per song, plus $5.25 in shipping and handling, is also available to be purchased on the web site.

Customers who open a new account will have the opportunity to create a free custom CD of 10 songs by Discover Local Music artists.

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